# THE TRYALL OF OVR SINCERE LOVE TO CHRIST:

By W. PINKE, *late Fellow of Magdalen Colledge in* OXFORD.

Ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται. Ignat. Epist. ad Rom.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

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# THE TRYALL OF OUR SINCERE LOVE TO CHRIST:

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Ephes. 6. v. vlt.

*Grace be with all them that loue our Lord Iesus Christ in synceritie.*

NOt to mispend any good time in a needlesse preface, my text is part of the farewell close of an heauenly Epistle, wherin the composer of it in the solemne forme of a benediction wisheth Grace (*i.e.*) all those precious mercies and glorious benefits which flow from the grace and fauour of God, vnto all such as loue Christ Iesus in syncerity. The originall hath ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ in incorruption, as our translaters haue expressed it in the margent, the sence is all one, for to loue Christ in syncerity, is to embrace him entirely without any rottennesse of heart, without any vnsoundnesse of affections, without any mixture of hypocrisie. The Greake scholiast conceiued the Apostle by the word ἀφθαρσία to haue required not so much the syncerity, as perpetuity of loue vnto Christ in those

whom he blesses & therefore hee expoundeth it by the adverb ἀφθαρσία, vnderstanding it not so much of a pure vncorrupt, as of a constant incorruptible loue, which yet alwayes presupposeth the other. I confesse the word may very well sit vnder this interpretatiõ, but yet I prefer the former before it, & both a great deale before *Bezaes* with due reuerence vnto so incomparable a man) who hath turned al quite another way, referring ἐν ἀφθαρσία not to loue but to grace, & taking it for εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν *ad immortalitatem*, as if the sense were to be, Grace be with all them which loue Christ Iesus, vntill they come or to bring them vnto immortality. The construction of the word which our translatours haue made choyce of hee mieds, becouse hee could not remember, that ἀφθαρσία had any where that signification, I confesse it's a very rare one, and for that reason I haue insisted vpon it, being perhaps not to bee found out of the new Testament, but if any man please to looke in the 2. to *Tit. v.* 7. hee shall there find the word, and hardly capable of any other construction. *Beza* indeed suspecting that it crept out of the margent into the text, hath there left it quite out, which I wonder at, seeing himselfe confesses that he found it in the ancient Greeke Copies, wherfore I suppose without any prejudice to the discourse which I shall build vpon this scripture, I may proceed confidently according to oure owne translation especially seeing I know some six more of good note which all read either in or with sincerity. In briefe then, the meaning of my text is this, Let the fauour of God and all those blessings which issue from it, rest vpon those who

doe not by groundlesse presumptions flatter themselues or counterfeit apperances perswade others that they loue Christ Iesus, but doe in very deed and good earnest loue him with all their hearts, and with all their soules. Or thus, Let the gracious promises of God in Christ bee fulfilled vpon them and them only, who embrace and obey his Gospell with sound and honest hearts, who are true Christians in whom is no guile. For wee must note that as the whole Law of God πλήρωμα ἀγάπης as the Apostle speakes, is summarily comprised in the word Loue, Loue to our neighbour including all the duryes of the second table, and loue to God, the duties of both, though more immedialy those of the first, even so our loue vnto Christ comprises all the duties, all the respect and homage which wee owe vnto him and his Gospell.

It is not my purpose to dismember my text by the vntoward curiosity of a diuision: I haue not as yet learned that piece of methode. The reasons inducing me to the choyce of this Scripture arose from a serious consideration of the spirituall estate of these times. Wee liue in an age of most peremptory presumption, & we may obserue that our presumption of the end is vpheld by our presumption of the meanes. No man but thinkes he shall bee saued, and why? becauſe euery man thinkes him selfe to bee a Christian, to bee one that loues Christ, which to speake more rationally is but one presumptiō, for it is no presumption for a man to beleeue that hee shall be saued vnlesse hee bee vnassured of this supposition that hee is a Christian. In a word, whereas there is a twofold grace

of God his promising and rewarding grace, and then his qualifying or sanctifying grace, wee presume vpon that, because wee presume vpon this, wee make full account of his mercies and promises, because wee make no question of those holy qualifications in our selues which dispose vs to believe in him and to loue him. Now then here wee all suppose, that the everlasting fauours of God doe most vnfalsibly pertaine vnto all & none but such as loue Christ Iesus, 2. that our selues are all such, the first supposall being cleare out of my text, all our care must bee for the assurance of the second, to see that wee are not mistaken in our account of our selues. The triall of all lies in this syncerity, whether weeare indeed those men in respect of Christ which wee verily thinke our selues to bee. That therefore I may acquaint you both with the necessity and methode of this triall, that I might shew you both what need wee haue to examine the syncerity of our loue vnto Christ and Christianity, and after what manner wee ought to goe about it, that if it may please the opener and turner of hearts to effect any thing by so cõtemptible an instrument, I may awake some one out of that pleasant but deadly slumber which possesseth thousands in this land, and cause him to looke better to his standing. I haue resolued by the assistance of the spirit at seuerall opportunities to discourse vnto you of 3. generall heads, or most considerable points in our loue vnto Christ, 1. the ground or foundatiõ of our loue vnto Christ, the reasons wherefore wee are Christians. 2. the degree or intention of our loue vnto Christ, how much wee ought to loue him, or in what pitch of re-



solution

lution to resigne ourselues vnto him. 3. the effects and opperations of our loue vnto him, or the speciall fruites of our syncerytie. In my discourse of the ground of our loue vnto Christ I haue proposed vnto my selfe this method 1. I will discouer two deceiuable insufficient groundswhich at this day betray thousands vnto perditiō, causing them to fall short of those glorious hopes which were built vpon them. 2. I will lay open the true ground and proper originall from whence all syncere affection vnto Christ ariseth. The first of those deceiuable grounds, is custome, the discouering of which will take vp as much time as your patience will bee willing to allow mee at once.

The fall of man hath not so farre woren out of his heart the impressions of a Deity, and the engraffed notions of religion, but wee all bring into the world with vs those restles instincts, & importunate impulsions which not suffer vs to bee at quet vntill wee are initiated into some Religion or other, The Ancient Epicures though it were the scope of their damned profession to bee altogeather irriligious; and the most contenting perfection they could proiect vnto themselues, yet as wee may perceiue by such writings as they haue left vs they could neuer fully attaine vnto it, but in spight of their affected Atheisme they were forced to betray many shrewd grudgings and terrible gripes of naturall conscience. And though in the deniall of divine prouidence vpon the supposall of which depends all religion, they put a good face vpō it, & seeme to laugh at the matter, yet we may perceiue they were still gawled with that *formido*

oppositi and by those engraued principles were euer and anon stirring to reall feare of that truth which they would faine haue mocked out of the world either as an ancient inuention of policy to keepe men in awe, or as an inueterate slauery of vulgar ignorance. The same inbred seedes of religion by which it pleaseth God to force a manifestation of himself euen vpon those who would faine haue no notice of him, and in the most reprobate minded to make Atheisme rather a wish then an opinion, after so many successions of ages are no whit decayed, but remaine still as stirring and active in the hearts of men as euer they were since they receiued that vnhappy crush by the first transgression. For the Creator of all things as the Psalmist tells vs Psal. 33. 15. fashioneth the hearts of all men alike, the word is יחד, which signifyes together at once, intimating that the hearts of all men, though separated from one another by neuer so vast a gulfe of time or place, are as exactly alike in respect of their originall inclinations, as if they had beene all moulded at the same time. The worship of a God then, some kinde of religion is necessary vnto vs, wee cannot shift it off: but now the propensions of nature being blind and confused, & there being a various multiplicity of religions in the world, here ordinarily step in the lawes & customes of the country, into which the wombe of nature first empties vs, which shape our generall inclinations either to worship the true God or this or that Idoll, and the true God after this or that manner. Looke abroad into the world & obserue the swarmes of divers and contrary religions which either fill places apart by themselues

ſelues or are promiſcuouſly exerciſed amongſt one another and you ſhall perceiue them to bee nothing but the naturall inſtincts of religion in generall ſpecificated into diuerſe formes and faſhions by birth and education. For albeit there may bee many occaſions of and difficulties in the firſt bringing in of a religiō into a countrey, yet after it hath once by countenance from ſupreme authority and other plauſibilities inſinuated it ſelfe into the acceptance and approbation of the multitude, it thence forth becomes [illegible] to vſe S^t Peters word, and with an eaſy deſcent runs downe the ſtreame of ſucceſſion, being deliuered from father to ſonne as naturally, as the proper language, manner of diet, faſhion of apparell or any other cuſtomes of the countrie.

Now amongſt ſo many religions as in ſeueral parts of the world are by cuſtome conveyed & paſſed from one to another we ſuppoſe there is but one which wee may dare to truſt for our happineſſe, but one that can certainly doe our ſoules that good which moſt of them would ſeeme to promiſe. Neither will wee ſeeme to doubt but that this one ſauing religion is that which conſiſts in the knowledge of the only true God, & whom he hath ſent Ieſus Chriſt, and therefore wee will all ſeeme to be much in loue with this Heauenly profeſſion before any other whatſoeuer. If then we will be ſure not to cooſen our ſelues in theſe perſwaſions, not to ouer reckon our ſelues in our loue vnto Chriſt & his Goſpell, here is a maine buſines for vs punctually to enquire how we came by this loue & liking vnto Chriſt, vpon what motiue we haue preferred this profeſſion of Chriſt before ſuch a

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multitude of Religions in the World. You knew that no art or invention can force waters to mount above their spring head: in like manner, it's impossible that our affections vnto Christ should be more elevated, more heavenly and spirituall then the originall from whence they streame. If then being put to it, by our selues or others, wee can thinke of no better reasons for our choice of Christianity then such as these, because we had the fortune to be borne in a place where Christ only was talked of, because wee haue heard *Turkes*, *Iewes*, and *Papists* much spoken against, and were ever told that this is the best religion, because the King and lawes haue banished all other sects, and haue established this profession of Christ which wee haue alwaies beene brought vp in, and could neuer see any harme in it, if such fottish, senselesse stuffe be the best defence wee can make for our selues, it appears too plainly that our religion is nothing but those common reliques of naturall instincts which I spoke of before, christned as it were by humane lawes and customes, and that wee are Christians vpon no waightier inducements, then wee might haue beene *Pagans* or *Idolaters*. I tremble to speake it, if an *Indian* should be demanded why he worshipped the Divell, changing only the circumstances he might giue as sufficient reasons as these for his most fearfull & horrible Idolatry. But this example though it might square but too well to my purpose is too odious to be insisted vpon. Aske a common *Iew* why hee blaspheames our blessed Saviour, why hee expects another Messias, a *Turke* why hee is circumcised, why hee is so devoted to

*Mahomet*

*Mahomet*, they will both in effect giue the very same reasons of their blaspheamies and superstitions, which a common ignorant Christian will giue why he is rather a Christian then a *Iew* or a *Turke*, iustify their damned hatred and detestation of Christ, by the same arguments, which cause him to professe speciall loue and service vnto him. Nay you will say there is no Christian so barbarously ignorant but he may say more for himselfe then any of those vnbeleiving miscreants can, he hath heard the holy Scriptures read, beene made partaker of the blessed sacraments, he hopes to haue his sinnes forgiven him by Christ, and though he be not able to proue it by formall argumentation yet he knowes well enough that *Turkes* and all such as speake against Christ are accursed infidells. I thinke indeede there are not many Christians but may say so much and perhaps more, by wrote, & taking it vp vpon trust, but this is quite besides the purpose. For I doe not now question the Christian in the duties or opinions of his religion, but I call vpon him for his speciall reasons which cause him to performe those duties, or embrace those opinions. Hee hath beene partaker of the blessed Sacraments, but what better reason can hee giue why these Sacraments can doe his soule good: then a *Turke* may, why his circumcision should be beneficiall vnto him; he hath heard the Scriptures read and expounded, but what better reason can he giue, why he supposeth the Scriptures to be the word of God, then the *Turke* will, why he is so confident that the *Alcoran* came dawne immediatly from heauen, in that *Laylatto-Hantzil* as they call it, the

night of demission; Lastly he stifly conceits himselfe to be one of the only true faith, and all *Turkes* to be abhorred infidells, but what peculiar evidences hath hee that the *Turkes* are mistaken and not himselfe, seeing they are as confident on the other side that Christians are *Cafirouna* Infidells as they tearme vs, and that themselues are the only *Moslimina* or *Musulmans* (i.e.) right beleeuers? If then the Christian being pressed with these demands can produce nothing from any supernaturall alteration which hee hath felt wrought in him selfe, if he be not able from spirituall selfe experience of that cutting convincing power of the Scriptures, and of those admirable vertues and comfortable influences of the sacraments, if he be yet altogether vnacquainted with those celestiall flashes, irradiations and inward testimonies of the spirit, which vse to put all these things out of questiõ in soules truly Christianiz'd. Lastly if for want of better Apoligy hee be forced to retire to those poore dishonourable impertinent rather excuses then reasons of his religion, taken from the lawes and customes of his countrey, it is too too manifest that he adheres vnto Christ vpon no better motiue then others blaspheame & persecute him & even spit at the mention of his name, but here some may put in: howsoever such a Christian may be outbraved, yet that which he saies and thinkes is true: he is in the right though he cannot demonstrate like a scholler how he came to it, and therefore he is sure howsoever men may prate, to speede well enough. No such matter, it's a very disputable case, whether such a one as liues and dies a Christian vpon

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cuſtome or a *Turke* bee in the groſſer error. This may ſeeme very harſh, but you may eaſily eſpy the truth of it, if you pleaſe to remember, that both the aſſent of our vnderſtandings, and choice of our wills may be miſguided into error two waies: either by aſſenting vnto, and approuing that as true and good which in it ſelfe is falſe and evill, or by aſſenting vnto or approuing that which is both true and good in it ſelfe, vpon weake, incoherent, inſufficient inducements, I cannot ſtand to comment vpon this diſtinction, and it is ſo triviall that I conceiue it need not much to be exemplified. Applied vnto my purpoſe it clearly ſhewes the ignorant Chriſtian not to be a whit more in the right then the *Turke*. The obiect of his aſſent and loue is moſt right abſolutely in it ſelfe but relatiuely to him it is falſe, becauſe it is not an obiect vnto him for that truth and goodneſſe by which it's diſtinguiſhed from all other obiects, but for thoſe common corrupt grounds, which abſtractly conſidered, equally incline the ſoule to any obiect as well to the groſſeſt errors as the pureſt truth, to the extreameſt evill, as to the chiefeſt good. So that this compariſon is like to light moſt heauy vpon the Chriſtian, ſeeing the goodneſſe of the obiect will not excuſe or iuſtifie, but rather ſhame and condemne him, who profeſſing much loue vnto it, paſſeth by that which alone was louely in it. For the preſent indeede the Chriſtians caſe is infinitely the better, becauſe he may with more eaſe correct his error, and hath all requiſite opportunities to that purpoſe, but if he neglect to doe it hereafter, the *Turke* will get the better of him, when at the day of

judgement, he that hath died such a Christian, will bee glad to change places with him. In the mean time there is not any difference in their errors discernable to reason, for this is certaine that diversity of obiects, cannot put any difference in the assents, where the grounds are exactly the same, yea if some of the acutest moderne disputers haue rightly determined, that the assent vnto the premises, & the conclusion is but one and the same assent, being originally to those, and terminatiuely to this, I can scarce allow the difference to be so great. For then it skilles not how false or true the conclusion be absolutely in it selfe, but how strongly or weakely it's inferr'd out of it's premises, & therefore though one conclude an infallible truth, and another a monstr us falshood out of the same faulty premises, the errour of both is the same, if they assent vnto their conclusions vpon no other medium then this insufficient one, vpon which they both agree. For example, the principle vpon which the ignorant Christians assent vnto the Gospell stands, is this; That religion which my Parents haue taught me, my soveraigne commanded me, & the c mmon cry of my countrey approued is surely the best. The *Turke* changing only the appropriating circumstãces, suppose likewise, that religiõ which his *Sultan*, Parents and Country men haue commended vnto him to be questionlesse the best. Both then proceede vpon the same medium, and therefore though by the intervention of other casualties, the *Turke* be cast vpon execrable blasphemies and impieties, and the Christian vpon heavenly and holy truths, their error is directly the same

same though more fortunate in one then in the other. And howsoeuer such a Christian hath his assent and imaginary loue by lot of his birth & education, actually fixed vpon sauing truths, yet vntill he bethinke himselfe of more proper and solid reasons for his choice, he retaines still in his breast habitually and implicitly the seedes of all those hellish impostures, which by other men, in other places, haue beene entertained and swallowed vpon the same occasions. Suppose a Christian, who can make no better defence for his profession then such a one as I haue laboured to make him ashamed of, immediatly after his birth in England had beene conveyed into Turkie, and there insteed of Baptisme circumcised after the Turkish manner, and there so cunningly trained vp in the Turkish superstition, that he had no occasion giuen him to suspect himselfe not to haue beene borne a Turke: no question but hee would haue beene as zealous there for the rascall Mahomet, as now being bred in England, he is for the blessed Lord of the world: And no maruaile, for the very same occurrences which haue made him a Christian here, must needs haue made him a Mahometan at Constantinople, seeing that whatsoeuer arguments drawne from lawes, customes, birth, education, plead here for Christ would there perswade as effectually for Mahomet. Neither speake I this as if this would argue any notorious imperfection in the man: for doubtlesse this would bee any mans case. Suppose any of those renowned Champions of Christ whom Queene Mary sent to heauen in fiery Chariots had

beene nurſed and brought vp amongſt the Saracens, vnleſſe God had vouchſafed them a miracle for their conuerſion, wee cannot imagine but they would haue beene Saracens. Suppoſe the deuouteſt Saint of God at this day breathing had beene trained vp at the ſeete of ſome Iewiſh Rabbin if wee looke no higher then ordinary meanes wee muſt needs conceiue that with the helliſh malice of a Iew hee would haue defied that bleſſed Sauiour of his, whom now hee worſhips day and night. I mentioned not that therefore to ſhew the weakneſs of the perſon, but of ſuch reaſons of his Chriſtianity, as changing only the ſcene of his nativity & education, might haue made him hotter againſt it then now hee is for it. So that the only fundamentall reaſon why ſuch a Chriſtian is rather a Chriſtian then a Iew Turke or Idolater, is becauſe Chriſtianity beſpoke him as ſoone as he came into the world, and permitted not thoſe mad ſuperſtitions either to ſpeake with him at all or not till it ſelfe had preuented them and gotten poſſeſſion. For we may obſerue that albeit generally in the world errour keepes truth out of the ſoules of men by anticipation, damming vp all the paſſages by which ſhe ſhould enter with baſe precedents & odious preiudices, yet in ſome corners where diuine prouidence hath bin pleaſed to allow truth an authoriſed, ſetled reſidency, it gets the ſtart of error & preuailes as much by prepoſſeſſion here as errour doth in other places, beating that a way with the ſame clamours & ſoutcries by which it ſelfe is elſe where baffled. But this to ſpeake more punctually is not a fight betweene truth and errour, though by the vndiſcerning

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vulgar it be mistaken for it, but a kind of blindfold combat betweene preiudice and preiudice, or of custome against custome. For in these cases though truth block vp errours way and so keepe that from stealing into the soule, yet doth not shee presently enter in her selfe, but stands as it were before the dore displaying her resplendent rarities and admirable perfections, and if for their sakes alone shee bee not earnestly invited to come in and importun'd to take vp her lodging there, she vouchsafeth not to enter but at last flings away in disdaine. Men may imagine shee is gone in because they cannot heare or see heresie or superstition stirring within, but for certaine saving truth never presseth into any soule vpon the bare advantage of being the first commer, but for her owne singular worth she lookes to be wooed, importuned, & with some violence haled in, as the blessedst guest that could possibly haue come first or last. But here may some demaund, if the summe of all this that hath beene spoken bee true, *viz.* That our loue vnto Christ & his Gospell be not gotten by our birth & education amongst *Christians*, what benefit is it to borne with in the visible Church? what prerogative to bee bred in the light of the Gospell? I answere that it's an advantage of inestimable value, for which wee all owe more thankes and praises vnto the Lord then our shallow braines and narrow hearts can possibly conceiue. But wee must wisely consider the proper end & vse for which it hath pleased the father of lights to afford vs this blessed priuiledge, which is not that it should bee a cause, but a meanes, not a ground but an occasion of our loue vnto his beloued

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ſonne. In our common friendſhip wee can eaſily diſtinguiſh betweene the contingẽt occations of our acquaintance with a man, and the immediat reaſons of our affectionate loue vnto him: thoſe are accedentally offred from without, theſe are ſome ſpeciall excellencyes apprehended by vs to bee inherent in the perſon wee affect: thoſe are but meanes to bring vs to the knowledge of theſe. Euen ſo in our ſpirituall loue vnto Chriſt Ieſus bleſſed for ever, the Lord hath gratiouſly planted vs within the ſound of the Goſpell, giuen vs education in Chriſtian rites and faſhions, and prouided vs the teſtimony of the Church to tell vs that there is ſuch a Sauiour come into the world, and to bring vs ioyfull newes what vnualuable treaſures of mercy & glory he hath brought with him to enrich all ſuch as ſhall come vnto him pinched with the ſence of their ſhirituall pouerty; Thoſe are the meanes appointed to giue vs notice of theſe, but theſe only muſt bee the grounds of our affection vnto him. To conclude this diſcourſe, albeit our loue vnto Chriſt begotten by our naturall birth & educatiõ, be nothing worth in it ſelfe, yet is it the ordinary rode which leades vs to the ſight and ſenſe of thoſe tranſcendent perfections in him which will rauiſh vs with a more tranſcendent loue of him: Happy are we if that baſe vulgar loue bee in time ſwallowed vp in a loue more Celeſtiall and divine, if that which can doe our ſoules no good while we reſt vpon it become a manuduction vnto that which will certainly make vs bleſſed. Had not the Samaritans beleeued at firſt vpon an inſufficient ground, the alatum of the woman, they had not come to

beleeue

beleeue vpon the true, their owne knowledge & experience. Had not the faithfull seule which is now most sicke of a spirituall loue vnto her Sauiour, first loued him vpon heare say & custome, she had neuer felt in all probability those heauenly trances and vnvtterable raviſhments with which now shee is transported. All that loue which wee professe vnto Christ betwene our first birth, and the first pangs of the second, is a loue arising onely from nature and custome, and is tolerable in vs while wee are children, being not so properly an errour as an introduction vnto truth: I say it's a hopefull preparation in children which are not yet come to that ripeneſſe of their naturall faculties that the ordinary meanes of grace, the preaching of the Gospell may worke vpon them. But after they haue attained to maturity of reason & should beginne to haue διὰ ξιν γεγυμνασμένα as the Apostle speakes, their senses exercised to discerne betweene good and evill, if they proceede still in such childish conceipts of Christ Iesus, and drowsy affections vnto him as they sucked from their nurses breasts, their loue beginnes now to be grosly sinfull, & whensoever it shall please the Lord to thunder them out of that sleepe of death, wherein now they enioy some cõtenting dreames they must penitently bewaile it amongst the other sins of their vnregeneracy. I haue done with my discovery of the false ground of loue vnto Christ, by naturall instincts of religion restrained to Christianity by birth & education. Before I proceede to an application of this discourse, I will insist vpon some appoſite places of holy Scripture, which will adde both light and strength, vnto

the precedent di course, & I hope prepare your hearts to the ensuing application. And first we haue an excellent place *Cant.* 5 *v.* 9. where the spouse, that is the faithfull soule, hath this interrogatory doubled vnto her, *what is thy beloued more then a beloued* מה דודך מדוד *mah dodek middod, what is thy beloued more then a beloued, (i.e.)* what transcendencies, what singularities of alluring perfections, are so peculiarly remarkable in that saviour of them, on whom thou art so strangly enamored, as if there were nothing louely besides him? But what hath the soule nothing now to cõmend in her Saviour, but what might bee paralleld in some other? yea, from that verse to the end of the chapter, she runnes on in a description of his rarities: a description so stuffed with the choisest delicacies of expression that I am perswaded it cannot be matched out of any of those Poets which haue flowen highest in amourous inventions, I cannot stand to vnfold them vnto you: that which makes most to my purpose in it, is the superlative preeminence which she giues him *v.* 10. *He is the chiefest*, or as it is more elegantly in the originall, *He is an ensigne bearer amongst ten thousand*, for so the word דגול *Dagull*, properly signifies *v.* 16. *He is altogether louely*, כלו מחמדים *cullo machamaddim, he is all entire*, he is all cõposed of loues, whereupon she concluds with a triumphant Epiphonema, *This is my beloued and this my friend, o yee daughters of Ierusalem.* A second memorable place is *Phil.* 1. *vers.* 9. 10. where S^t^ Paule speakes thus, *and this I pray that your loue, (*to wit, to Christ and his Gospell*) may abound yet more & more*

*in knowledge, and in all iudgement, that you may approue things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere & without offence, till the day of Christ.* The Apostle praying for the confirmation of their loue vnto the Gospell, and as an especiall means of that he praies, they may abound in all iudgement, by which they bee able vpon good grounds to approue the reall excellencies of truth before the plausibilities of errour, that so they may by syncere in their loue vnto it, to which purpose also he praies for the *Ephesians* that *they might be rooted and grounded in loue*, Ephes. 3.17. A third considerable place is 1 *Cor.* 12.3. *Wherefore I giue you to vnderstand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Iesus accursed: and that no man can say that Iesus is the Lord but the Holy Ghost* [i.e.] No man can with the fiduciall assent of his heart, acknowledge Christ to bee the onely Lord, which he is to worship by the same impulsions, by which another curses and blaspheames him, but by such peculiar motiues as are suggested and revealed vnto him by the holy Ghost.

There is no man in this assembly but would thinke it very strange, if one should tell him seriously hee could not say, much lesse thinke, that Iesus is the Lord. But if he thinke or say him to be so vpon no other persuasions then professed infidells thinke & say him to be *Anathema*, his saying will doe him no good though he make it his only work to reveale it as long as he liues. The last place shall be that eminent one in Saint *Peter*, 1. 3. 15. *But sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready alwaies to giue an answere to every man that asketh you a*

*reason of the hope that is in you.* What reason? such a one as may be retorted by those who question vs? such a one as may perhaps make more against vs then for vs? such a generall one as might be giuen for any presumption in the world? No, a reason from a cleare distinct kowledge of the peculiar grounds, & experimentall sense of those encouraging foretasts of our incorruptible hopes by the Gospell: which though it cannot convince such *Hereticks* and *Infidells* as examine vs, because the God of this world hath closed their eyes, yet it may strenthen vs to possesse our soules in patience, and to hold fast our confidence which hath such great recompenses of reward in spight of all the terrours of Men or Divells.

*Vse* 1. To admonish every man here present with all speed & diligence to commune with his owne heart, and to examine whether hee be as yet come out of his customary loue vnto Christ into a spirituall, or no. Beloued we are all confident that we loue Christ Iesus, and if one should in earnest tells vs, we did not loue him, wee should take it as ill, and interpret it as if he told vs wee were damned. Seeing then all our glorious hopes of a better life are built vpon this supposition, that we are the true disciples of Christ, as we would not be called to after reckonings at that solemne day of accounts, or haue a flaw found in our evidence, which should eternally dash our expectation, even then when wee should take possession, as we would not haue our hopes to vanish in amazement, and confusion at that terrible day, when it shall be too late to recal or rectify any thing which hath beene formerly amisse, as we would not haue our confidens

fident conceipts of Christs loue vnto vs, and ours vnto him giue vs the slip at the houre of death, when wee should haue most vse of them, and leaue vs to a fearefull expectation of iudgement. Let vs, I say, if we haue any regard or sense of these things, deale ingeniously with our owne soules, and impartially examine what better ground we haue for that supposition which vpholds all our welfare, then such as I haue demonstrated to bee miserably insufficient. Christians wee are all by education, by country and custome, by conformity vnto lawes and fashions: but is this all? haue wee proceeded no further? why this will aduantage vs no more for heauen then that we are Englishmen. All this is but the outside of Christianity. Christianity thrust vpon vs by our naturall birth before wee were aware of it, and setled on faster by custome, and as it were rivited in while wee perhaps never thought of it. What saith the Apostle 2. Romans, 28. *Hee is not a Iew which is one ἐν τῷ φανερῷ in that which appeares outwardly.* What not hee a Iew which is borne and bred a Iew? yea hee is a Iew in all outward visible respects what soever. But all these will giue him no title to those everlasting promises which are made vnto *Abraham* and his seed according to the faith. Hee is no Iew in respect of them. In like manner he is no Christian, who is but outwardly one: who slides insensibly to himselfe into the visible garbe of Christianity; by naturall generation. He only is a Iew, who is one ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ in the secrets of his heart, and hee only is a Christian, who hath beene made one by a second birth of his soule, invisible to others, but admirably sensible vnto himselfe, being borne

not of bloud, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, as S^t *Iohn* fully expresseth it, c. 1. v. 13. Well then, if thou wouldst not be mistaken in thy selfe, if thou wouldst be ascertained whither or no thou lou'st Christianitie vpon any other motiues then such as nature and custome may suggest. First of all looke backe vpon the estate of thy soule ever since thou hast beene able to remember. Reflecting thus vpon so much of thy life as is gone, canst thou not remember a time wherein thy selfe being iudge, thou didst but dissemble with thy Saviour, when thou thoughtst of him but very seldome, and then but perfunctorily, without any heat of affections, when thou tookest not much to heart any thing he hath done for thee, when thou tookest no conscionable care to liue vnto him, because he had died for thee. Reflecting thus vpon the time past, canst thou not discerne but that thy loue vnto Christ hath beene spun out in an even thred even from the cradle vntill now, but that the pulse of thy affections vnto him hath alwaies beaten much after the same manner, without any notable variatiō. In a word canst thou not remember but that thou hast loued him alwaies as well, if not better, then thou hast in the latter time of thy life past. I say if the case bee thus with thee, its a thousand to one but thou louest him only vpon that deceiuable ground which I haue laboured to discouer.

To direct a little farther in this examination. Suppose the winde which now sits in thy backe, and kindly blowes thee on towards Christ, should turne vpon a sudden and furiously bluster in thy face. Suppose those lawes

lawes and cuſtomes which hitherto haue encouraged thee to proceed in Chriſtianity, ſhould command thee back againe, and tell thee they were miſtaken: ſuppoſe all the men thou knoweſt or heareſt of, ſhould change the faſhion of their religion, and leaue thee as much alone, as *Elias* once thought himſelfe to haue beene: and holy *Athanaſius* was when he held vp againſt a world of *Arrians*, I ſay if the τὸ ἴδιον, τὸ γνώρισμα that ſpeciall excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt, which made S. *Paul* to count all things dung, that hee might winne Chriſt, hath not furniſhed thee with vnanſwerable reaſons, why theſe ſuppoſalls ſhould not pull thee backe, its a plaine caſe, that only the oppoſite encouragements ſet thee forward. To bee briefe, art thou not ſure that thou haſt ſuch ſpeciall peculiar reaſons for thy religion as could not haue ſuffered it, much leſſe haue cauſed thee vpon any ſuppoſalls to haue beene of any other. Haſt thou not with an inlightned vnderſtanding eſpied in Chriſt Ieſus thoſe vnparalel'd tranſcendencies which put an infinitely vaſt difference betweene him & thoſe many Antichriſts in the world. Laſtly, haſt thou not at ſome time or other, in ſome meaſure had thy conſcience convicted of ſinne, reviued with ſuch gracious influeces diſtilling from his louely countenance, and refreſhed with ſuch words of eternall life from him, as thou knoweſt (goe whether thou wilt) cannot be expected from any one elſe. If thy heart anſwer no to theſe interrogatories, aſſure thy ſelfe thou knoweſt not yet what this meanes to loue Chriſt, I ſhould but flatter thee to tell thee thou art a Chriſtian, yea I ſhould in ſome ſort make

thee,

thee, by giuing thee a glorious title, which if thou continue as thou art, will no way benefit thee, yea it will not only keepe thee out of heauen, but sinke thee deeper into hell. Giue glory vnto God that thou liuest in a time and place where thou hast all encouragements, opportunities, invitations to be more entirely acquainted with thy Saviour, and to grow as intimate with him, as any man elfe, but for the present be content to consider that thy loue of him hitherto hath beene built vpon a rotten foundation; giue no rest vnto thy selfe, vntill thou hast learned to loue thy Saviour vpon such inducements as hee would haue thee, euen because hee hath loued thee. Giue not over importuning the spirit of grace *to direct thy heart into the loue of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ*, as the Apostle divinely prayes for the Thess. 2. Ep. 3. 5. Giue not over I say, vntill thou hast *attained vnto all riches of the full assurance of vnderstanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*, as the same Apostle sweetly prayes for the Colossians. 2, 2.

*Vse* 2. Let me bespeake all such, as by the tender mercies of God melting their hearts, haue beene made partakers of the heauenly calling, and begotten againe vnto a liuely hope, let me, I say, if there bee any consolation in Christ, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels & mercies, let me beseech them to take two things deepely to heart. First, the infinite dishonour which is done vnto Christ the Author and finisher of our faith by the customary profession of his glorious name and Gospell in this kingdome. It's aboue three-

score

score yeares since the Saviour of the world hath vouchsafed after a most especiall manner to reside amongst vs early and late, to call & cry vnto vs, to take notice what need we haue of him, to bethinke our selues of our infinite wants, which none but he can supply, counselling vs as hee did the Church of *Laodicea* to buy of him gold tried in the fire that we may be rich, and white rayment that our nakednesse might not appeare an eye salue, that now in this our daies we might see those things which belong vnto our peace, and all this without mony: Now that after all this there should be thousands amongst vs, who being asked a reason of the hope that is in them, cannot speake tolerable sense why they are Christians rather then professed Infidels; that there should bee whole parishes which cannot afford one wise word toward the defence of our most holy profession, that many who will take it very ill, if they are not accounted as good Christians as the best, should thinke no otherwise of Christ, then some doe of S. *Patricke*, and S^t *David*, and other of the Saints of their country. Lastly, that those great and precious promises which Christ hath purchased for vs, with the vnvaluable price of his owne deerest blood, by those who one day thinke to haue their share in them, that they set as slothfull, ignorant, heartlesse affections vpon them, as professed Infidels doe vpon those poore imaginary, deluding hopes which Satan is permitted to abuse them with, questionlesse it becomes not any man, who hath resolved the rest of his time in the flesh, to seeke the things of Christ Iesus, and hath felt in his owne soule what good reason

he hath for it, I say it becomes not any such to thinke of these things which grate so mercilesly vpon his Saviours wounds, and even make them bleed afresh, without sighs and groanes, a bleeding heart, & a great deale of secret mourning. Betweene the millions of men who hate the Redeemer of the world, and the multitude which loue him, they knowe not wherefore, O how few are there which loue him in syncerity! The second thing which I would intreat of those who vnderstand what a wofull thing it is to bee a stranger vnto Christ, to bee yet vnreconciled vnto God by him, is that they would with yerning bowels commiserate the lamentable condition of their poore ignorant brethren, which they shall meet with every where, especially in most country Villages. I haue obserued vpon occasions much table merriment which hath been made by tales which passe about of such absurd, senseleſſe answers as silly Christians haue giuen, being demanded a reason of their faith, perhaps vpon their death beds or at their comming to the Lords table. Let such vnnaturall mirth be farre from those who are to striue to haue the same minde in them which was in Christ Iesus. You who by that blessed change wrought in your soules, haue passed from death vnto life, consider with a thankfull reflexion vpon the Father of lights, that had not hee vouchsafed you a more ingenuous education, fairer opportunities to grow acquainted with the mysteries of grace, more distinct call of his sanctifying spirit, and more illuminated apprehensions to discerne them, you might haue groped & stumbled in a thicker mist of stupidity then now befooles your vnnurtured brethren, you might

might haue dishonoured that blessed name by which you are called, by as wild misconceits and horrid follies, as any come from them, and whatsoeuer is ridiculous in them might haue beene more prodigious in you, you know what prise to set vpon your owne soules. You know the soule of the meanest idiot is of equall value with youre, and that it cost the redeemer of the World as many stripes and wounds as yours, O then pitty thy brethren so likely to perish, for whom Christ died, yea the rather, because they being stuffed with sottish conceipts, will be ready to laugh at those who shall pitty them: Take all opportunities to doe them some spirituall good as occasion shall be offerered, conferring with them and praying for them, and let Christian sympathies be the least you can afford them; you know what you meane, when you pray daily that Gods kingdome may come; remember, you pray not in earnest, vnlesse you doe your faithfull endeavour to helpe it forward, as in your owne hearts, so in the hearts of your brethren, with which at any time you converse. Consider I beseech you, what a dismall fog of Popery doth yet darken this Iland, Popery which few thinkes of, I meane that blind absurd implicite faith of beleeuing, as the Church beleeues. For there is not a pin to choose betweene him that beleeues in grosse, what the Church of England beleeues, and him that beleeues as that synagogue of Satan the Church of Rome beleeues, neither knowes any thing explicitly, what either Church beleeues. Meditate on this, and what zeale, what courage, what indignation you feele in your breasts against

the Antichristian impostures of Rome, let them fly I beseech you vpon all occasions, against this Protestant Popery. But I see no hope but that the Colliars faith will haue the greatest number of professours, whilst accurate Catechizing of all sorts of people, which did so much good in the primitiue Church, is in ours so generally neglected. But I conclude, bespeaking you in the words of S. *Iude, But ye beloued, building vp your selues on your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost. Keepe your selues in the loue of God, looking for the mercies of our Lord Iesus Christ vnto eternall life. And of some haue compassion making a difference. And others saue with feare, pulling them out of the fire: hating euen the garment spotted by the flesh.*

O thou father of mercies and God of all consolations, look down from thy throne of eternity, and take notice of vs thy poore seruants, who doe now desire to muster vp all the faculties which thou hast giuen vs, & to employ them in an acceptable thankesgiuing vnto thee. O Lord we desire to spend our best spirits euen to exhale our deerest soules in thankefull eiaculations vnto thee, for that most incomprehensibly admirable contriuance of our saluation, by the death of the sonne of thy loue: O Lord wee desire to be transported with a holy amazement, as often as wee thinke of this mystery of mysteries, and euen to empty our hearts of their secrets in halleluiahs, and voices of exultation. Most holy Lord, wee praise thee, for the marvelous light of thy Gospell, which hath acquainted vs with those wonders of mercy, which thy Christ hath performed for our

soules

ſoules, for thoſe comfortable evidences of our juſtification by him, with which our bruiſed conſciences haue beene moſt gratiouſly revived. Wee praiſe thee likewiſe for thoſe wonders of a new creation which thy bleſſed ſpirit hath begunne in our hearts, for that it hath begunne to weaken and waſt the body of ſinne, to crucify thoſe corruptions which heretofore haue bin moſt inſolent in vs, to weane vs from thoſe vanities, which heretofore haue beene our chiefe comforts, and to make vs more willing to be kept within a holy compaſſe. O Lord, wee deſire, wee deſire with moſt enlarged hearts, to bleſſe thy infinite goodneſſe, for all thoſe raviſhing irradiations & glorious prefaces of our bleſſed immortality, by which thy comforting ſpirit, hath ſo often encouraged vs to patient continuance in well doeing. We bleſſe thee for all the heavenly thoughts, affections, deſires, and reſolutions which thou haſt put into vs at any time, wee praiſe thee for that portion of thy good word which thou haſt afforded vs at this time, O thou that delighteſt to pardon abundantly, pardon all the errours & imperfections which haue come either from me in delivering, or any of thy people in entertaining thy meſſage. Let it not be a ſavour of death vnto death, vnto any man who hath beene within the ſound of it, but let it ſome way or other be beneficiall vnto him in reſpect of thy kingdome. And now oh thou that dwelleſt in vnapprochable ſplendor, quite out of the ken of mortality, ſeeing thou haſt ſuffered duſt and aſhes to approach ſo neere to thee in thy ordinances, diſmiſſe not any one of vs we beſeech thee without a bleſſing, ſend

not any one of vs without a comfortable beame of thy countenance ſhining into his heart; Thou art the fountaine of holineſſe, ſend vs not therefore out of thy preſence, without ſome more clearneſſe in our apprehenſions of thy ſauing myſteries, and heauenlineſſe in our affections vnto them. Send vs not frō thy throne of grace but with a heauenly calme in our ſoules, or with ſuch tempeſts of repentāce as may prepare vs for an everlaſting ſerenity, O Lord ſend vs not away but either with that joy which paſſeth al vnderſtāding, or that godly ſorrow which may prepare vs for it. To thee O father with thy beloued ſonne and bleſſed ſpirit, three moſt glorious Perſons, and one infinite Deity, be aſcribed all honour, power, praiſe, might, maieſty, and dominion, by vs poore ſinners here militant on earth, & all the glorified companies triumphant in heauen, from this time forth for ever more. *Amen, Amen.*

FINIS.

# THE TRIALL OF OVR ſincere loue to Chriſt.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

EPHES. 6. verſ. 24.

*Grace be with all them that loue our Lord Ieſus Chriſt in ſincerity.*

I Will not diſcourage your attention with a tedious repetition of what I haue heretofore in another audience delivered vpon this Scripture: ſome thing muſt needs be recalled to guide your attention into the enſuing diſcourſe, and to knit that vnto a former: but I will not trouble you with a word more, then the neceſſity of methode ſhall enforce me vnto. To winde vp then as much as is neceſſary in a briefe introduction, Wee liue in an age of a Preſumpti-

on as peremptory as vniuerſall: they are rare men that make any queſtion of their ſalvation, and which is moſt to be pitied, they are for the moſt part ſuch as haue leaſt reaſon. I am perſwaded, there was never yet any time when men were generally more confident in their hope of heaven, or leſſe able to giue a wiſe reaſon for it; inſomuch, that it may be but too probably conjectured, that to one that periſhes through deſpaire, there miſcarry hundreds through preſumption. This generall preſumption ſtands vpon theſe two generall ſuppoſitions. 1, That Grace, (i.) all the gracious, precious promiſes of God concerning a better life, doe infallibly appertaine to all ſuch as loue Chriſt Ieſus in ſincerity: (i.) to all ſuch as are true, ſerious, reſolute Chriſtians. 2, That wee our ſelues are all ſuch men, that we are all Chriſtians good enough to ſerue the turne, though we are not ſo forward and exemplary, though wee keepe not ſuch ſtirre with our profeſſion as ſome others doe. The firſt ſuppoſition is out of all queſtion, and can neuer be brought into diſputation by thoſe which ſubmit to the Scriptures, it being the ſcope, not onely of my text, but alſo of the whole Goſpell, yea of the Law and the Prophets. So that (with reuerence be it ſpoken) it ſhall be as poſſible for God, that is the eternall truth it ſelfe to lye, as for that ſuppoſition to faile any man, who obſeruing the conditions of it, caſts himſelfe vpon it: ſo that in ſtrict propriety of ſpeech, it is not of it ſelfe any prop of preſumption, but onely by accident as it's ſubject to miſ-application by vs. Well then, preſumption ſtands more directly, and leanes more heavily

vpon

vpon the ſecond ſuppoſition, and therefore all our care muſt be every man for himſelfe, to ſee that wee are not miſtaken in our account at home, to be ſure we are all ſuch men as we dreame our ſelues to be (i.) ſuch Chriſtians, as may vpon good ſufficient grounds, lay claime vnto, and plead intereſt in all the glorious promiſes in Chriſt Ieſus. Vpon this I obſerued all the conditions required on our part, and by conſequent, the whole tryall of our aſſurance, to be compriſed in this ſincerity of our loue towards him; and farther, for the exact tryall, and through examination of this, I impoſed vpon my ſelfe, the handling of three moſt conſiderable points which make vp it ſelfe, and evidence vnto vs the ſincerity of our loue vnto Chriſt. 1, The true immediate ground, or originall of it. 2, The requiſite degree or intenſion of it. 3, The eſpeciall fruites and effects of it. Concerning the originall of our loue vnto Chriſt, amongſt many inſufficient deceiueable grounds of it, I vndertooke the diſcovery of one which I found to be moſt dangerous and vniverſall: viz. naturall inſtincts of religion in generall reſtrayned to Chriſtianity by birth and education. This diſcovery, I haue already elſewhere at large, as God enabled me, performed. In the ſecond place, I promiſed a declaration of the true, proper, and ſure ground of ſincere loue vnto Chriſt: and this by the aſſiſtance of the bleſſed ſpirit, you ſhall haue pay'd at this time.

Well then, what is the moſt immediate and proper ground of the ſincere loue of a poore ſinner vnto his Saviour Ieſus Chriſt? I anſwere out of the queſtion,

when in earneſt hee findes himſelfe to be a miſerable ſinner, and apprehends Chriſt Ieſus to be his gracious Sauiour, and one of whom he ſtands in infinite need. Or to deliver it more fully, it is a cleare, diſtinct, particular, tender apprehenſion of his owne infinite wants and miſeries by reaſon of ſinne, and of thoſe miracles of loue and mercy which Chriſt hath performed to cure theſe and ſupply thoſe, and that as freely and purpoſely for him, as for any man elſe. To cleare and confirme this excellent point, I will, as God hath directed my meditations, firſt proue it to be ſo, and then demonſtrate, why it is ſo. That it is ſo, appeares by ſundry places of holy Scripture, out of which I will cull ſome few, which ſeeme to mee moſt pregnant and pertinent. *I loue the Lord*, ſaith holy *Dauid*: *Pſal.* 116. 1. marke his reaſon, *becauſe hee hath heard my voyce and my ſupplications*. But what kinde of *ſupplications* were theſe? vpon what occaſion were they made? you may ſee both, *v.* 3. 4. *The ſorrowes of death compaſſed me about, and the paines of hell gate hold vpon me: then called I vpon the name of the Lord, O Lord I beſeech thee deliver my ſoule.* Theſe were my ſupplicatiõs, which the *Lord hath heard, and therefore I loue him*, yea *becauſe he hath inclined his eare vnto me* in theſe my ſpirituall agonies, *I will call vpon him as long as I liue*. 2° Wee haue an eminent place, 1. *Ioh.* 4. 19. *We loue him*, marke his reaſon, *becauſe he firſt loued vs*. True, ſome may ſay, God hath loaded vs with innumerable expreſſions of his loue in our creation and preſervation, and wee doe reciprocally loue him for them: but what's this to the loue of Chriſt? To omit

as impertinent in this place, that in ſome ſort we owe both our creation and temporall preſervation vnto Gods loue in Chriſt; ſeing it is not probable, but the whole frame of nature ſhould haue beene diſſolued preſently vpon the fall, had not God of his mercy intended a Redeemer for man-kinde to be revealed in the fulneſſe of time: but to let this paſſe, S^t *Iohn* in the words, *becauſe he firſt loued vs*, vnderſtands that loue of loues, that boundleſſe, incomprehenſible loue of God wherewith he hath loued vs in Chriſt: as it plainely appeares by comparing 9. & 10. verſes. In this, (i.) in this infinitely more then in any mercy of creation or preſervation, was manifeſted the loue of God towards vs, becauſe that God ſent his onely begotten ſonne into the world, that we might liue through him. *Herein is loue*, (i.) herein infinitely more then in any thing elſe, *not that we loued God, but that he loued vs, and ſent his Sonne to be the propitiation for our ſinnes.* To recollect all, and to bring it home to the poynt in hand, when as the ſame S^t *Iohn* ſpeakes *v.* 16. *Wee haue knowne and beleeued the loue that God hath to vs, when wee finde our ſelues to haue beene euen dead men, and that God ſent his Sonne, that wee might liue through him:* when we perceiue our ſelues overloaden with ſinnes, and that Chriſt was ſent purpoſely to be a propitiation for them, O here is the true originall of our loue vnto him, now we loue him, becauſe he firſt loued vs. A third place, & I'le trouble you with no more, is, *Luc.* 7. 37. where wee haue a whole parable to this purpoſe, delivered by our Saviour himſelfe to make the Phariſes vnderſtand, what that poore

woman meant by those strange distracted and seemingly maddie expressions of her loue vnto him in washing his feet with teares, and wiping them with her haire &c. The parable is of a creditour and his two debters: I neede not repeate it, most of you know it already, others may peruse it if they please. The application of it is, that then sinners doe indeed fall in loue with their Saviour when they perceiue themselues to be over head and eares, as we say, in debt vnto God, and themselues most vnable to discharge one farthing, when they feele that God begins to put his bond in suite which they had forfeited long before they were borne, when hee sends an arrest for them by the terrours of his Law, their owne consciences, and the spirit of bondage. Lastly, when they feele themselues even haled towards that prison from which never any man came out, which was once in, & then most opportunly comes in Christ Iesus with his merits, satisfies his father to the full, rescues them out or the sergeants hands, that they being delivered out of the hands of their enemies may serue him without feare, in holinesse and righteousnesse before him all the dayes of their life. Indeede the conclusion of the application vers. 47. seemes to thwart and vnsay all that which I haue said: *Her sinnes which are many are forgiuen her, because shee loued much.* I deny not but the words as they are, admit a pious sense, neither am I ignorant with how little adoe they may be reconciled which haue beene hitherto spoken. But if I might be worthy to deliver mine owne opinion, with due respect vnto the translatours, I would alter one

word in the tranſlation, which I ſuſpect ſhould runne thus: *Her ſinnes which are many are forgiuen, therefore ſhee hath loued much.* The ſenſe requires this conſtruction, 1. Becauſe the whole ſcope of the parable is to ſhew that he loues moſt to whom moſt is forgiuen, and not contrarily, that moſt is forgiuen to him that loues moſt. 2. The antitheſis in the ſame verſe requires it, the words, but to whom little is forgiuen he loueth little, ſuppoſeth this theſis, becauſe many ſinnes are forgiuen her ſhe loueth much. Now as the ſence requires this interpretation, ſo the conjunction *ὅτι* admits it: for albeit not in the pure Greeke *idiom*, yet in the helleniſticke vſe of it, it anſwers to all the acceptions of the Hebrew כי which hath ſometimes the ſignification of *ideo*, *quapropter &c.* Neither may it prejudice this interpretation, that our Saviour after all thoſe expreſſions of loue from the penitent woman, and his apologie for himſelfe and her to the Phariſee, tels her that her ſinnes are forgiuen her: this was but that ſentence of abſolutiō for her greater cōfort, & aſſurance outwardly pronounced, of which no doubt but ſhe had before ſome gratious inklings within, & the vertue of which ſhe had already taſted, though not in that comfortable meaſure, or diſtinct manner as ſhe deſired. But now I would not willingly be miſtaken in the point as if my opinion were, or I intended to proue out of the afore-cited places, that there is no true loue vnto Chriſt, but what is grounded vpon an actuall perſwaſion of the remiſſion of our ſins by him. Alas how many poore ſoules even languiſh with a ſpirituall thirſt after him! how many bleeding

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hearts both feele and expresse most vehement pangs of of importunate loue towards him: how many broken spirits euen spend and exhale themselues in continuall sallyes as it were, and egressions of affection vnto him, who haue indeed heard, but not as yet tasted how gracious he is, who haue not as yet perceiued in themselues those inward whisperings of comfort, *feare not, I am thy saluation: be of good cheere thy sinnes be forgiuen thee*: in a word, who haue not as yet felt themselues *sealed to the day of redemption by that holy spirit of promise?* To rescue the truth out of these clouds, and to present it in her brightnesse vnto you, wee must first obserue that every degree of true spirituall loue vnto Christ, proceedes from a proportionable act of saving faith: Secondly, that there is a twofold loue, 1. one of Desire, which is an earnest longing after that, which wee beleeue would doe vs much good if we could attaine vnto it. 2. Another of complacencie, when having attained that wee desired, we hugge, and embrace it, and solace our selues in the fruitiō of it. Now as ordinarily in the loue of any other obiect: so likewise if we respect Christ Iesus, the first of these loues is the introduction to the second, & both of them issue from a proportionable act of faith precedent. That affectionate longing and thirstie loue wherewith wee pant and gaspe after Christ having neuer yet beene refreshed with any comfortable testimony of the spirit since the beginning of our humiliation, proceedes from that former act of faith whereby wee assent vnto all the Gospell promises as most true and good in themselues, and infinitely better vnto vs then

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any thing in the world, could we be once aſſured that they belong vnto vs as well as to other men? That other loue of complacencie, when with the Pſal. wee returne vnto our reſt, becauſe the Lord hath dealt bountifully with vs, and ſweetely repoſe our ſelues in the lap of our Saviour, with content vnſpeakeable and full of glory, proceedes from that laſt act of faith, whereby wee are actually perſwaded by thoſe welcome whiſpers of the ſpirit of adoption, that Chriſt is as certainly our Saviour as any mans elſe, and that our debts (as infinite as they were) are cancelled to a farthing, as well as the ſmaller ſummes of others. Laſtly it will not be amiſſe to obſerue two things of this loue of complacencie ariſing from a perſwaſion of Chriſts loue vnto vs in particular. 1. It's ſubiect to all the variations or changes, ebbings and flowings of that perſwaſion. For as often as in any violent temptation, or ſenſible diſertion our perſwaſion ſeemes to be confuted, this loue of complacencie is either for a time quite ſtupified, or elſe it falls backe as it were into that thirſty anxious loue of deſire. 2. This loue of complacencie admittes degrees proportionably to the degrees of that perſwaſion. If that be cleare and ſtrong, this loue is more chearefull and pleaſant: If that be weake and obſcure, this loue is not ſo ſprightfull, but ſomewhat lumpiſh being cold with many feares, and jealouſies. Whence this loue of cõplacencie may not vnfitly be ſub-divided. 1. Into Ordinary, loue which proceedes from a weaker degree of that laſt act of faith, & though ſincere, yet being imperfect, is mixed with anxiety in the ſame proportiõ as that

is with doubting. And 2. into Heroicall loue which springeth from a more eminent and transcendent pitch of perswasion concerning our owne reconciliation in particular: this is that perfect loue, which S^t *Iohn* sayes, casteth out all feare (viz.) of distrust, bringing vs into a more intimate familiarity with God. I call the first Ordinary, because most Christians though effectually called doe ordinarily feele but such a timorous loue in themselues. The second which I call Heroicall in that sense in which eminent vertues haue their Epithite, is constantly onely in such as either beside the evidence of the word and spirit, haue had some speciall revelation to put them out of all doubt concerning their estate to God ward, or such as by a constant close walking with God, haue beene long exercised in a Christian course, haue often entertained Christ Iesus at supper in their hearts, and habituated themselues into a more familiar acquaintance, with that holy spirit which brings all the good news from heaven to those diligent soules which carefully wait for it.

Thus haue I, according to the skill that is giuen me, proued the originall of the sincere loue of a sinner vnto Christ Iesus blessed for ever, to be a serious tender apprehension of his owne extreme neede of Christ, and of Christs superabundant loue vnto him. I haue likewise explained this truth, and vindicated it from such exceptions as crossed my way. I come now to discover the demonstratiue reason of this truth, and after I haue shewed that it is so, to shew you how why it must be so.

Wee are all borne into the world haters of

God, and while wee continue in that naturall ſtupid condition, wherein wee were borne we *are all ſtrangers, but vnto God, and Chriſt, yea enemies in our mindes through wicked workes*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes *Col.* 1. 21. Wee retaine indeed ſome obſcure cloudy notions of a God, but not the darkeſt intimations of a Saviour, or leaſt ſuſpition of any neede wee haue of one. In a word albeit we are borne and bred within the ſhrilleſt ſound of the Goſpell, yet as long as wee continue ſtarke meere animall, naturall men, it will not ſinke into our heads, that we are in ſuch miſerable caſe as Preachers would make vs beleeue we are, how ill its like to goe with vs vnleſſe we laborioully enquire after Chriſt, and get to be reconciled vnto God by him. Now what more effectuall methode can wee imagine to beate vs out of this naturall antipathie againſt out Creatour and Redeemer, yea what other contrivance may there be to worke ſuch peeviſh wretches, ſuch froward rebels out of one extreme into another out of deadly hatred to ſincere loue of the eternall father and his onely ſonne, to pull downe their proud ſtomaches, to make them crouch and craule vnto his throne of grace, then to make them ſee in what a hell they are while they ſtand in this diſtance from him to awake their conſciences againſt them, and to make them a terrour vnto themſelues to let the Law thunder and lighten into their ſoules vntill their wits and ſpirits begin to faile them, and then amidſt all theſe amazing tẽpeſts to let the glorious Goſpell of Chriſt ſhine vpon them, to ſhew them Chriſt Ieſus with his armes of mercy ſtretched out, and vnder-

taking to free them out of all these confusions, and to make their peace with his father if they will but come vnto him, and trust their selues with him, if they will but lay to heart, and learne to esteeme and admire those wonders of redemption which he hath compassed for them. Had the prodigall sonnes stocke held out, and he lyen still afloate in the full-tide of his sinfull pleasures, he had set vp his staffe in that farre country, and quite forgot that he ever had a father: yea when the tide was gone, and had left him vpon the sands: when the revels were ended, his bravery quite worne out into beggery, & himself preferred to be an attendant of a company of hogs, if he could but haue got his belly-full of huskes, he would hardly haue thought of returning home: but when these were denyed him, and he could see nothing but death before him, O now he comes to himselfe, and begins to thinke of a father he had, and resolues to goe vnto him, though hee might well suspect his entertainment. Well, whatsoever that may proue, he is sure hee goes to a father, and therefore on he goes, and when he was yet a farre off, full of aboding feares, and disconsolate musings, behold his father about his necke before hee was aware of him, acting an over-joyed man, hee hangs about him, and kisses him, trims him vp with a robe and a ring, conducts him home in a kinde of triumph, and welcomes him with the solemnity of a feast and musicke. Here was a change for the prodigall enough to haue turned his braines as wee say, but sure it could not but turne his heart. Had that beene of marble or adamant, this could not but melt it into loue. O what

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a ſwelling, a throging, a wraſtling did he now feele in his bowels of tendreſt paſſions, impatient for want of expreſſion! O how did he now lay about him with teares of ſorrow and teares of joy, being much puſled, whether it would beſt become to proſecute his joy moſt or his ſorrow: in briefe how mad is hee with himſelfe that hee had beene ſuch a ſonne to ſuch a father! I haue inſiſted the longer vpon the prodigals caſe, becauſe indeede it is our owne. For ordinarily, our heavenly father vſeth the ſame method to fetch vs his prodigall children home vnto him, and to bring vs in loue with his beloued ſonne Ieſus Chriſt. Wee are all as ſoone as wee are borne, gotten into a farre countrey, where wee miſ-ſpend, and miſ-employ all thoſe faculties and endowments, with which our Creatour hath furniſhed vs, in the revels of ſinne and vanity, walking on merrily and confidently κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κοσμοῦ τούτου as the Apoſtle ſpeakes *Epheſ.* 2. 2. *according to the courſe of this world:* profeſſing indeede for faſhion ſake loue both vnto God & Chriſt, but all the while denying and diſclaiming them both, in our hearts and converſations. But *God who is rich in mercy for his great loue wherewith he hath loued vs. Epheſ.* 2. 4. When hee hath let vs runne our ſelues even out of breath in theſe riotous courſes, and even tyred our ſelues in our journey to hell, thinkes it fit to ſtop our progreſſe, and firſt to make vs vnderſtand our ſelues, that wee may the better eſteeme of him and whom hee hath ſent IESUS CHRIST! Firſt then hee inſpires vs with ſo much ſpirituall life, as may make vs feele our ſpirituall burden, conſiſting of

our sinnes, and his curses due vnto them; hee raises vp many affrightments, and grim apparitions in our consciences, he giues Satan leaue to insult over vs, whatsoever outward contentment we fasten on, to put vs out of these dumpes, hee beates vs off from it, he leaues vs not huskes to feed on, he driues vs out of one shift into another, till at last we are driven out of all, and so farre, that we see plainely, there is but one way with vs, even to perish everlastingly, vnlesse we can get to be reconciled vnto him. Now we begin to come to our selues, and perceiuing our onely course which wee haue left, to be, to cast our selues vpon Gods mercy, but no getting neare vnto that, vnlesse his justice be first satisfied, no possibility of that on our parts, vnlesse wee can get the satisfaction of Christ imputed vnto vs, finding the Scriptures so peremptory, that there is *no comming to the Father, but by the Sonne, that he that hath the Sonne, hath life, but hee that hath not the Sonne, hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*: Ioh. 3. 30. O now wee begin to see it was to some purpose, that we haue heard Preachers talke so much of Christ; now wee begin to hearken better after him, to value and admire him, now we wonder how we could endure to be without him so long, that wee could thinke so slightly of him heretofore, now those holy fits of loue grow vpon vs apace, and vpon a suddaine, with the *Spouse* in the *Canticles, wee are sicke of loue.* Now are wee entred into the loue of desire, and while our poore soules are sweating in these restlesse passions, we heare at length Christ Iesus in a milde still voyce, inviting all such as are wea-

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ry and heavy laden to come vnto him, that he may giue them reſt: vpon this wee addreſſe our ſelues towards him, with our burden vpon our ſhoulder, and when we are got within ken of him, he ſeemes ſometimes to goe backward from vs, to make vs more eager after him, and thus oft-times he lets vs ſtand trembling and ſhaking, weeping and groaning vnder our burdens, till wee are even ſinking & ſwowning vnder them, and then hee conveyes them away, cleares vp the heavens over vs, ſpeakes like a husband vnto our ſoules by his Spirit, hee preſents vs vnto his Father, who now ſmiles vpon vs with a reconciled countenance, and then vnto his Angels, who amongſt all their *Hallelujahs*, receiue ſome addition vnto their triumphant mirth by our conuerſion. Now no man need tell vs what Chriſt hath done for vs, we feele reall experiments of all in our owne hearts, now we haue ſeene, and felt, and taſted how infinitely he hath loued vs, we are ready to make our boaſt of it, and with the *Pſalmiſt*, to invite all ſuch as feare God purpoſely that we may declare vnto them what hee hath done for our ſoules. Now we are in that loue of complacency, now we cling vnto him, and would faine come out of our ſelues, to creepe vnto him, affecting not onely a vnion, but a vnity with him, now we beſtirre our ſelues in all the holy complements of heavenly loue, never thinking we haue done enough, frequently bathing our ſelues in thoſe delicious intimacies of our ſpirituall marriage which how much they paſſe all vnderſtanding, I appeale to their experiences, to whom theſe things are no Paradoxes.

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You see the excellent contrivance, by which our stubborne rebellious hearts are wrought over vnto the sincere loue of Iesus Christ: I suppose it now expedient to cleare this discourse of the originall of vnfayned loue, from some doubts and scruples which may arise from it.

1 Whether none can loue Christ in sincerity, but those that are brought vnto it by this method? I answere, not one, ordinarily, if his conversion be wrought by the Ministerie of the Word. The reason is plaine out of what hath beene deliuered. Wee are to loue Christ as a Saviour: how can wee be brought to those, vntill we feele our selues lost, and vnderstand what need wee haue of a Saviour? Wee are to loue him as a Mediatour: what reason is there for this, vnlesse wee first plainely perceiue God to be our enemy? Lastly, wee are to loue him as our Physitian: what sense is there for that, if we feele not our selues in some danger, if wee feele no aches or gripings, no smart about our soules, if wee finde no good that Christ hath done vs, or can doe vs? Himselfe tells vs, *the whole haue no need of the Physitian, onely the sicke*, such as feele and acknowledge themselues to be sicke, will make vse of him. But here it's requisite to obserue, that the severall passages of this great alteration wrought in our affections, are more or lesse sensible, according to the severall conditions of the persons. Wee are all prodigalls, yet some more, some lesse: wee are all gone into a farre contrey, yet some roue a great deale farther then others: For illustration, some haue had a more restraining education

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tion then others, and beene traynedvp in a more innocent civility, vntill the time of their viſitation, which oft-times overtakes them very early, and takes them in before they are acquainted with the villanies of the world, or vices of the times: ſuch, though commonly they take weeping croſſe in their way too, as they come home vnto Chriſt, yet they paſſe not through ſo many pikes, ſo many pangs and terrours, but with leſſe ſtirre and difficulty arriue ſafely at his boſome, and get within his embraces. On the other ſide, ſome are ſtarke prodigalls, meere Publicans, ſuch as haue taken their full ſwindge in the wildeſt exorbitancies, ſuch as haue ſerued an apprētiſhip, perhaps two or three to the World, the Fleſh, and the Devill, ſuch as theſe, when it pleaſeth God to put his hooke in their noſtrils, to turne them round, and make them looke towards heaven, are brought to the loue of Chriſt, even ſtep by ſtep in that method which I haue formerly deſcribed. The other are brought vnto the loue of Chriſt, but theſe being once brought vnto it, loue him more vehemently, for it's certaine *he loues moſt, to whom moſt is forgiven.*

2 Doubt, Whether our loue vnto Chriſt would not be more pure and acceptable vnto him, if it aroſe from an exact, ſteddy contemplation of thoſe infinitely amiable excellencies, and tranſcendent beauties, which are reſplendent in his perſon; he *being the brightneſſe of glory, and the expreſſe image of his Father. Heb.* 1.3. or as it is verſ. 7. 26. *The brightneſſe of the everlaſting light, the vnſpotted mirrour of the power of God, and the image of his goodneſſe.*

I answere by proposing three briefe considerations:
1. That is the truest loue of Christ, which beates vs out of our naturall enmitie against him, and brings vs home with longing affections vnto him. Now it's most true, that the person of Christ, absolutely considered without the relation of a Saviour vnto vs, is invested with most attractiue excellencies, and ravishing beauties: but if a glimse of that orient lustre should flash in the face of an vnregenerate man, or impenitent sinner, vnlesse the sanctifying spirit should at the same instant renew his heart, it might driue him out of his wits, but not out of his sinnes, it might terrifie him into a desperate trance, but not advance him to a kindly extasie.

Likewise, if one should goe about to winne an enemy of grace vnto the loue of Christ, by the most accurate Metaphysicall discourses of those infinitely superlatiue beauties in the Deity absolutely considered, either they would be phantasticke riddles vnto him, or at least-wise prevaile no more with him to that purpose, then it would perswade him to loue one dearely, whom hee mortally hated, to tel him that he was a comely Gentleman. 2. Suppose these mysticall contemplations were effectuall this way, yet he that is yet vnacquainted with the power of converting grace, is altogether vndisposed to set himselfe about them. An acute, but vnsanctifyed Schoolеman may overstraine his vnderstanding with a wearisome gaze vpon those invisible beauties, and dazell it into a more distempered ignorance, but not into such a ravishment of loue, as may warme and elevate his affections: whereas the penitent soule, which

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by the grace of converſion, hath felt thoſe ſacred conjugall affections already kindled in it ſelfe, may advantage her ſelfe excellently by ſuch contemplations, by her intellectuall aſpirings and aſſayes, as it were to ſee him that is inviſible, and by refreſhing her ſelfe with ſweeteſt meditations of thoſe inconceiueable glories which are aboue, where Chriſt ſits at the right hand of God. So that ſuch contemplations, though they cannot ordinarily begin ſincere loue vnto Chriſt in our hearts, yet they may keepe it vp, blow it into a purer flame, and advance it to a degree of Angelicall ſublimity. 3. That loue of Chriſt is moſt ſincere and acceptable vnto him, which giues him moſt glory of that which hee deſires moſt to be glorifyed in: viz. of his goodneſſe, his attributes and workes of mercy in our ſalvation. Hee requires not an ayerie, but a fiery loue. Hee reſpects not ſo much that ſpeculatiue loue, which conſiſts in a ſimple amaze of the vnderſtanding, or bare admiration of thoſe vndiſcouered perfections of his nature, which haue not as yet done vs any good, though one day the ſight of them ſhall be a part of our bleſſednesſe. Chriſt requires that loue of vs, whereby we confeſſe our ſelues beholding vnto him, that loue which layes vs flat before him, and whereby we acknowledge wee owe our ſelues vnto him. I may much admire and applaud a man of excellent parts, for his rare endowments, and yet thinke my ſelfe no more beholding vnto him, then he is to me, yea I may beare grudges againſt him in my minde, and be farre from any affectionate loue towards him: Even ſo with ſome Schoolemen, and writers of

mysticall Theologie I may busie my braine, and set my minde a staring vpon that absolute *Idea* of vndefiled beauty in the Deity, and yet as long as I continue vnsensible of what Christ hath done for my redemption, retaine a frozen and a flinty heart.

If we loue G. only because he hath loued vs, it seemes that in our loue vnto him, we haue a chiefe eye vnto our selues, & that we loue our selues more then him, which ordinarily cannot be pleasing vnto him, or any way stand with sincerity. For answere, we must distinguish betweene the impulsiue and the finall cause of our loue vnto Christ, or in termes somewhat plainer, betweene the first inward occasion of it, and the maine scope of it. My care of my owne soule originally driues me to hearken after a Saviour, and when I haue found him, and finde withall, that hee hath bought me out of my selfe, *that I am not my owne*, as it is, 1. *Cor.* 6. 19. henceforth the maine scope and principall ayme of my loue vnto him is to doe that for which chiefely I was created and redeemed, to let goe all interest in my selfe, to giue him his whole right, to *glorifie him both in my body, and in my soule, for both are his*, as it is in the place now cited. So that my loue vnto my Saviour albeit it come occasionally and impulsiuely from my loue of my selfe, yet it is terminated principally in his glory, though accessorily likewise, as hee is contented, it should in my owne happinesse. This is excellently illustrated, 2. *Cor.* 5. 14. 15. *The loue of Christ constraineth vs*, saith St *Paul*: why so? *because we thus Iudge, that if one dyed for all, then were all dead*: here is that originall of our loue implyed

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which I haue ſo largely inſiſted vpon, it followeth, *and he dyed for all, that they which henceforth liue, ſhould not liue vnto themſelues, but vnto him that dyed for them, and roſe againe.* This is the end of Chriſts loue vnto vs, and muſt be the buſineſſe and maine drift of our loue vnto him. So that our loue vnto Chriſt, ariſing from a tender apprehenſion of his loue vnto vs, is not mercinary, but makes moſt for his honour, ſeing that if he had not prevented vs, wee ſhould in ſome ſort haue ſtood vpon equall termes with him. Laſtly it is his good pleaſure, that we ſhould loue that moſt which is beſt for vs, that in which moſt conſiſts our perfection, if therefore wee loue him as our perfection, conceiving our ſelues to be worſe then nothing without him, if wee remoue our ſelues as it were into him, and according to that ſweete phraſe of the Apoſtle, *hide our liues with him in God:* Though all this while implicitly wee loue our ſelues, yet we neede not doubt of our ſincerity: this is the very loue which he requires. *S^t Pauls* loue vnto him was ſuch as this. *Gal.* 2. 20. *I liue, yet not I, but Chriſt in mee, and the life which I now line in the fleſh, I liue by the faith of the ſon of God*: marke the reaſon, and firſt the inducement to all this, *who hath loued mee, and giuen himſelfe for me.* It's time by your patience to come to ſome application.

1. For examination, to perſwade every man, that would not cozen himſelfe in his perſwaſions concerning his ſpirituall eſtate, ſpeedily, and impartially to examine the loue he ſuppoſes he beares to Chriſt Ieſus by what we haue amply diſcourſed concerning the true and proper Originall of it. Thou pretendeſt moſt entire

loue vnto Christ Iesus, whom thou calleſt thy ſaviour, thou wouldſt ſpit in his face, that ſhould make any ſerious queſtion of it, thou art confident that thou doſt not diſſemble with him. Well then, vpon this ſuppoſall giue me leaue to ſound thy ſincerity with theſe interrogatories. Doſt thou remember a time when thou hadſt not that loue in thy breaſt which now thou reckoneſt vpon for ſound and currant, though thou canſt not preciſely tell when thou got'ſt it? canſt thou tell vpon what occaſions, or geſſe at the manner how thou attainedſt it? Were thou brought vnto it by that method which I haue diſcovered, or at leaſt by one ſomewhat like it? If thy conſcience can now anſwere theſe propoſals affirmatiuely, why then I hope thou mayeſt picke a great deale of ſound comfort out of the precedent diſcourſe which will teſtifie vnto thee that thou loueſt Christ vpon a true ground, and that therefore, that grace and favour of God with all the bleſſings iſſuing from it, appertaines vnto thee, which the Apoſtle wiſhes *to all thoſe which loue Chriſt Ieſus in ſincerity*. But on the contrary, if thy conſcience ſtart at theſe demands, and begin to fumble at them, making as if it did not vnderſtand them, if they driue thee to confeſſe, that thou knoweſt no ſuch matter by thy ſelfe; why then my diſcourſe will conclude thy pretended loue vnto Christ, to be but a meere fancie, and thy ſelfe for the preſent to be but an vnhappy man. To goe yet more particularly to worke in this examination according to the method aboue propoſed. Haſt thou beene experimentally convinced in thy owne ſoule in what deſperate caſe thou

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art by nature? Haſt thou clearely perceiued to be true in thy ſelfe whatſoeuer the Scriptures tell thee of the monſtrous proneſſe of mans heart to any euill, and vntowardneſſe to any good? Haſt thou been made to poſſeſſe *the ſinnes of thy youth*, as holy *Iob* was? and haue the terrours of God ſtared thy guilty conſcience in the face, and affrighted it almoſt into a bloody ſweate, and then hath there appeared as it were an Angell comforting thee? Haſt thou felt thy ſelfe a condemned man, and euen going to execution, and hath Chriſt Ieſus in the nicke ſtept in with thy pardon both purchaſed and ſealed with his owne moſt pretious blood? If thou haſt felt either theſe paſſages, or ſome which may ſerue proportionably inſteed of them, to be the cauſe of that which thou profeſſeſt vnto Chriſt, I dare not queſtion the ſincerity of it, leaſt with thoſe, *Ezech. 13. I wound that ſoule, which ſhould not dye, and make the heart of him ſad, whom the Lord hath not made ſad*. I ſhould wrong thee exceedingly not to beleeue that Chriſt is him whom thy ſoule loueth, and that with S. *Pauls* conſtraining loue, *a loue as ſtrong as death, which many waters cannot quench, neither ſhall the floods drowne it. Cant. 8. 7.* But now on the contrary, to cõclude negatiuely from the former interrogatories, to inferre the want of ſincerity in any man for his not feeling thoſe paſſages as they are *verbatim* propoſed, would be too rigid, and perhaps raiſe a tumult in a well ſetled conſcience: Onely thus much Ile ſay, if all of them ſound as riddles and vncouth myſteries vnto thee, If thou never kneweſt any thing like to what was propoſed by thy ſelfe, as I feare many haue

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not. If thou knoweſt not what it meanes to *come heauyladen, poore in ſpirit, hungry and thirſty vnto Chriſt:* why then I wonder thou ſhouldſt be ſo ſottiſh as to conceiue, or impudent as to affirme, that thou loueſt Chriſt, if thou wouldſt haue vnderſtād thee, that thou loueſt him in ſincerity. I doe ſuppoſe thou loueſt him vpon cuſtome, as thou doſt the fashion of thy country in which thou haſt beene borne and bred, but ſo does the greateſt part of the world defie him, vpon as good a ground as that: ſo does a Turke loue *Mahomet*, one of the baſeſt miſcreant that ever was, vpon as ſubſtantiall a ground as that. But wee ſpeake of that tranſcendent loue of him, which cannot poſſibly be due vnto any one elſe, and which would be moſt due vnto him, though all the lawes and cuſtomes in the world ſhould vniverſally conſpire to crie it downe. Doſt thou profeſſe ſuch a loue vnto him, and knoweſt not wherefore? nor vpon what occaſion thou wert moued vnto it? It would vexe a man to the ſoule, who knowes indeede what it is to loue Chriſt, and how himſelfe was brought vnto it, to conſider the confident ſtupidity of multitudes in every place who will not be put out of their dreame, that they meane as lovingly to Chriſt as any man, when as indeede they are not as yet come ſo farre as to perceiue any proper reaſon why they ſhould loue him, or what reaſon hee hath to expect any loue from them. I know they will ſay, they loue him becauſe hee dyed for them, and they hope to be ſaued by him: Alas theſe are words of courſe, and as ſoone ſpoken as any other: they ſay this, becauſe they were ever taught to ſay ſo, & ne-

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ver liued among any that ſaid the contrary. Beloued, it is not the ſaying of this, or beleeuing it confuſedly like ſome old ſtory or tradition will melt our conjealed hearts into the loue of Chriſt: No, it muſt be a through diſtinct feeling of it in our owne ſoules, it muſt be the experience of this, which makes vs enamoured on him and ſets our hearts a mounting towards him in thoſe ſeraphicall flames of ſanctified affection.

2. The Originall of ſincere loue vnto Chriſt, being diſcovered, and directions giuen for ſelfe-examination concerning it, a ſecond vſe ſhall be for caution againſt many cozening ſemblances of loue vnto Chriſt, which may make vs thinke a great deale better of our ſelues then wee haue reaſon, which may eaſily be diſcovered by trying them by this Originall. To inſtance in ſome particulars: There is many a Ruffian in this kingdome, who if hee ſhould heare a *Iew* blaſpheming Chriſt, his blood would quickly be vp, he would long to be doing with him, and be hardly kept from hacking him in pieces. O what a friend vnto Chriſt will ſuch a man ſuppoſe himſelfe to be, he will conceipt hee hath behaved himſelfe like a Templer, and done him knights ſervice, and a hundred to one, but in this humour, he will call his companions *to come and ſee the Zeale which he hath for Chriſt Ieſus*. But if there were any ſuch ſwaggering *Zelot* in this aſſembly, I would aske him theſe queſtions: Doſt thou not thinke a hot ſpirited Turke would haue fallen as foule vpon the *Iew*, if hee had taken him villifying his Mahomet? Wouldſt thou not vndergoe as dangerous a quarrell to winne the favour, or pleaſe the

humour of thy mistresse? Would'st thou not thy selfe, or at least dost thou not know some who will quarrell as sternely about a pipe of Tobacco, or the pledging of a health? Lastly, hast thou not suffered thy companions to blaspheme Christ in their oathes, perhaps a whole day together, & thy zeale all the while hath beene very well contented with it? You see by these questions frō what variety of carnall vnsanctifyed motiues this seeming, plausible zeale may arise; and therefore in all such cases, it much concernes vs, to haue an eye to the true originall of all duties of loue, to consider, not so much what we doe, as what makes vs to doe it, and in a word, to judge of our affections, not by the heate, but by the fewell. For a second Instance: Many in reading the history of our Saviours life, and considering his sweete, debonnaire, and vnoffensiue carriage, and withall the contradiction of sinners, the insolencies of proud and churlish miscreants, which he endured with an vnimitable patience, will finde their hearts ever and anon rising in indignation against the Scribes and Pharisees, and even tenderly sympathizing with our Saviour. These men may presently imagine themselues to be deepely in loue with Christ, but they may be miserably mistaken. Let them consult with their owne experience, and obserue, whether they are not moued to as sensible passions, by the reading of any other storie, though profane, if it be any way proportionable vnto the Evangelicall story for occurrences: twenty to one but they will finde it so: There is not any good story, either sacred or profane, but for the most part it drawes

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the minde of the reader, for the time at leaſt, into ſome faction. Wherein it's evident, that ſuch ſtirrings of the affections, may proceed from a bare hiſtoricall faith, joyned with that common ingenuity of nature, which teaches vs to adore the heroycall vertues of Worthies, long ſince deceaſed, and to commiſerate their vndeſerved diſaſters. Yea, which is worth obſervation, they may proceed from this common ingenuity, by the meere working of the fancie, without any hiſtoricall beliefe at all. We finde it by experience in reading amorous ſtories, or hiſtories of ſtrange adventures, which though we know and beleeue to be fayned, yet oft-times, if handſomely contriued, they raiſe more ſerious tumults of paſſions in our mindes, then the moſt reall ſtories we can meete with. Now the reaſon of it (if my owne fancie faile mee not) is, becauſe the imagination, which hath the ſame command over the paſſions, which the Poets haue giuen *Æolus* ouer the windes, is it ſelfe ſtirr'd vp to ſympathize with all ſuch repreſentations as are exquiſitely ſhaped and limb'd according to it's owne Ideas and inward contrivances: and in this caſe, the imagination poring vpon the repreſentation it ſelfe, ſo that ſuite well with it's owne images within, it regards not much, whether it be of an acted truth, or of a poſſibility, forgetting, as it were, for the preſent, to diſtinguiſh what might haue beene from what hath beene. This obſervation directs mee to a third Inſtance, with which I will conclude: ſome perhaps may weepe devoutly at a Paſſion Sermon, and preſently imagine their teares to be diſtillations of ten-

der affections vnto Christ; They may be so, but they may very easily not be so. Who knowes not, that the charmes of eloquence about any sad argument, may easily steale good store of teares from an auditory of women, or of soft natur'd men? Solemne Musicke, a good Pavin will doe as much: any liuely representation of a Tragicall accident, whether reall or imaginary, will doe as much: Amongst those that can be so ill busied, as to sit 3 or 4 houres at a Tragedie, some can be so wisely, good natur'd too, as to weepe heartily at it. You see into what variety of mistakes, offices of loue vnto Christ may put vs, while we consider them loose by themselues, and examine them not by that which ought to be the fundamentall inducement vnto them in our hearts, you see how expedient it is to judge of these complementall expressions of loue vnto our blessed Saviour by our hearts, and not of our hearts by them, and by consequent, you see of what excellent vse this doctrine *of the ground, or originall of our loue vnto Christ* is.

*To God the Father, &c.*

FINIS.

# ΟΧΛΟ-ΜΑΧΙΑ.

OR

# *THE PEOPLES WAR,*

EXAMINED

According to the Principles of

SCRIPTURE & REASON,

IN

Two of the moſt Plauſible

Pretences of it.

IN ANSWER

To a LETTER ſent by a Perſon of Quality, who deſired ſatisfaction.

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By JASPER MAYNE D. D. one of the Students of Ch. Ch. *Oxon.*

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Rom. 13. 2.

Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω.

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